

THE
MAID of ORLEANS,
OF
VOLTAIRE.

(Price One Shilling)

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or address, written in cursive.



MAILED

NOTICE

(Price One Shilling)

*Spécimens de
Gronet du Collège Chanoine*

THE

9*

MAID of ORLEANS.

Translated from the FRENCH

OF

VOLTAIRE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. KEARSLY, No. 46, in FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXX.

THE

MAID OF ORLEANS



Translated by

OF

VOL. I

CANTO THE FIRST

LONDON

Printed by G. K. & S. N. 1864

A

TRANSLATION, &c.

CANTO THE FIRST.

*“Amours of Charles the Seventh, and of Agnes Sorel.—Orleans be-
“sieged by the English.—Apparition of St. Dennis, &c. &c.”*

I Was not born on holy themes to shine,
My voice is feeble, and I fear profane;
Yet must I celebrate the lady Jane,
Who work'd, they say, such prodigies divine.
Strengthen'd with maiden hand the Gallic lilly,
Made burly Bedford, and John Bull look silly,
And 'nointed good king Charles at Remo's shrine.
Jane, with a puling face of curds and milk,
A smicket white, and petticoat of silk,

B

Boasted

Boasted the courage of a true Orlando,
 And did as much as any mortal can do.---
 Had we an option for a night or two
 To toy, perhaps a lamb-like lass would do,---
 Would yield more gently on the sheeted plain,
 Nor fight so stout as lion-hearted Jane.---
 Read but this book, you'll tremble with affright
 To find the prowess of this female knight ;
 And yet the hardest of her works, I fear,
 Was to preserve her maidenhead a year.---

Chapelain ! whose Gothic and discordant lyre

By Phœbus curs'd, has strumm'd her piteous story ;

Good ancient Chapelain, all thy powers inspire,

And warm thy vot'ry for thy maiden's glory !---

Ah ! 'twill not be---in vain I'm making room here ;---

Macpherson seiz'd them to travestie Homer.

Honest king Charles consum'd in jovial hours,
 The feast of Easter at the town of Tours.---
 There at a ball—this monarch lov'd to dance,
 He found a beauty for the good of France :
 Agnes her name,---but ah! so sweet a maid
 Love never form'd till master of his trade.---
 Flora was first youth's blossom to bestow,
 Her shape, the goddess of the silver bow :
 Consenting Venus gave attractive grace,
 And smiling Cupid nestled in her face.
 To see, to love, to feel the rising fire,
 The daunted hope, emboldened by desire,
 To ogle Agnes, to affect to sigh,
 To lose his voice, and hesitate the lie,
 To press with eager grasp her yielding hand,
 And mark a flame impatient of command;
 In short, his ardent passion to display,
 And win her, was the business of a day;
 Your kings are apt to travel post that way.

But

But Agnes skill'd in such affairs of court,
 Wish'd with a slender veil to hide the sport,
 A veil of gauze ;---but courtiers piercing eyes
 Look as they're order'd on such mysteries.

To give a colour sort'd to the case,
 His majesty chose counsellor Boneau ;

A trusty courtier, native of the place ;

And 'twas a post of trust, tho' not of shew.

The levee, who to courtly phrase attend,

Stile such a confidant the prince's friend ;

While vulgar Cits, and every blackguard imp,---

In plainer language christen him a pimp.---

Mr. Boneau, a league or two from town,

Was owner of a very snug retreat,

Thither one evening Agnes hurried down,

And good king Charles contriv'd the fair to meet.

The

The cloth was spread,---no idle pomp was seen,
 Boneau attended,---and the board was clean.
 The gods were then partaking, I should guess,
 A grander supper, and enjoyed it less.---
 The gentle pair in troubled pleasure fit,
 Drunk with their love, a prey to their desires,
 While soft discourse supplies the place of wit,
 And wanton glances fan their raging fires.
 The prince with glutton eye devours her charms,
 With amorous dalliance strains her in his arms,
 Locks knee with knee, and Cupid's fort alarms,---
 Next came a concert, sadly out of season,
 Italian voices, for an obvious reason;
 They sang from history's instructive page,
 Of all the mighty men by love subdu'd,
 And who to please the gentle dames they woo'd,
 Had quitted glory's path, and conquests rage,---

The band was heard not seen---Boneau's address
 Had nich'd the fiddlers in a snug recess;
 And gentle Agnes wife as she was fair,
 Listen'd at will---they knew not she was there.

The moon was in her zenith; silent night
 Hasten'd the hours of amorous delight.---
 And now the gilt alcove, the virgin's friend,
 Where glimmering darkness, and faint light contend,
 Receiv'd between two sheets the beauteous maid,
 In nature's simple ornaments array'd.---
 And Alse, her woman, a sagacious slut,
 Pass'd thro' a door which she forgot to shut.---
 Ye gentle hearts, who Cupid's influence know,
 Think what impatience our good king must shew.---
 Taste had arrang'd his every wanton hair,
 And choicest perfumes fill'd the ambient air;

With

With silent step he reaches the alcove,
Moment divine of tenderness and love!---

Their hearts beat short, while warm desire and shame

With new vermilion Agnes' cheeks enflame:

But shame withdraws, unequal to the fight,

And warm desire usurps the coward's right.---

Clasp'd as she sinks in Charles's close embrace,

His eager eyes, enchanted, dazzled, blind,

Feed on the wond'rous beauties of her face,

And fancy charms, they cannot see to find.---

First was a neck that shamed the driven snow,

But ah! 'twas nothing to the heaven below.

Two separate orbs, that never cease to move,

And pant arrounded by the hand of love.

These fragrant orbs a bursting bud disclose,

And challenge Charles' hand to pluck the rose---

Challenge his eyes to banquet on the sight,

Challenge his lips that scarce refrain to bite.

I love

I love my readers, and was going on,
 To paint the charms of Agnes one by one;
 But that cold virtue, Decency by name,
 Arrests my pen, and brands my want of shame---
 Agnes, in short, and beauty were the same.
 The raptures she enjoy'd increas'd her grace,
 The purple flush of pleasure tinged her face.---
 Damsels of Britain, would you but essay
 To rouge your beauteous cheeks no other way.

Three months entire the gentle pair remain
 The happiest subjects in love's wide domain:
 To garish day the nuptial couch gives place;
 Day calls them to the pleasures of the chace:
 On Spanish couriers, swift as winds they fly,
 And listen to the hounds melodious cry:
 While scented baths attend their quick return,
 Cassia and frankincense around them burn:

Smooth

Smooth are their skins, their limbs new vigour own,
And all the labours of the day are gone.---
Next to the banquet Boneau's cares invite,
Where every luxury aids appetite;
The pheasant, the ragout, with sauces high,
Provoke the palate and delight the eye.---
The golden goblet sparkles with Champaigne,
And rich Toka glides quick thro' every vein,
Till the brisk spirit mounts into the brain. }
The king says witty things, and sits to quaff,
While fat Boneau applauds with hearty laugh.---
They prose, they reason, when the dinner ends
Relate long stories, and abuse their friends;
Send for ingenious Beattie, who rehearses
In Caledonian accent moral verses;
Or wishing livelier pleasures order in
Pinchbeck, two grave divines, a perroquet,
A dancing bear, an ape, a Harlequin,
A mountebank, an adm'ral of the fleet.---

So flow the hours, till at the close of day
 A chosen party meet them at the play;
 And then once more the happy couple prove
 The choicest raptures of indulgent love.

Loft on the filken bosom of delight,
 They seem'd to taste new pleasures ev'ry night;
 Happier as fonder, felt their loves encrease,
 Nor knew one quarrel to disturb their peace.---
 No languor pall'd the joy that rapture brings,
 And time with Agnes had forgot its wings.
 Full oft the monarch strain'd her in his arms,

Imprinted on her lips a burning kiss;

“ Then cried, my beauteous Agnes, my soul's bliss,
 “ Not for the world would I exchange thy charms.---
 “ Conquests and kingdoms at thy feet I lay,
 “ My parliament has banish'd me to-day.---

“ France

“ France by the savage Briton is o’er-run,

“ Yet let him envy me, when all is won,---

“ His be the honour of th’embattled plain,

“ Victorious in my Agnes’ heart I reign.---

A speech like this no heroism display’d,

But heroes may enjoy a beauteous maid,

And love may prompt them in a lady’s bed

To say they know not what, that might have been unpaid.

While honest Charles enjoy’d this jolly life,

Like a fat abbot with a neighbour’s wife,

The English prince continued to advance ;

Ever afield, in dreadful armour drest,

With helmed head, jack boots, and lance in rest,

He trampled under foot the pride of France.

Shed seas of blood, stole jewels, and such trash,

Gave up whole convents to the soldier’s rape ;

Melted down golden saints to current cash,

Nor let the Bernardine’s best wine escape.

And

And disregarding Mary and her rabble,
 Turn'd every church he met into a stable.--
 So might a passenger the wolf behold,
 Dealing fell slaughter thro' a trembling fold;
 While in a flow'ry mead, by love oppress'd,
 Young Colin sleeps upon Egeria's breast;
 And while his sheep-dog is employ'd to steal
 The little remnants of their scanty meal.

But from the seat of bliss, or Apogæum,
 Mansions remov'd too far for us to see 'em,
 The good St. Dennis, Confessor and Priest,
 To Pepin, Clotaire, Clovis, and the rest,
 Beheld the British standards waving high,
 Saw wretched France in desolation lie:
 Paris enslav'd, and the most Christian King
 In Agnes' arms,---not thinking of the thing,---

Patron

Patron of France this Dennis is become,
As Mars was tutelary faint of Rome :
But christians must this pious fact agree on,
One faint of ours is worth their whole Pantheon.

- “ Ah ! by my head, quoth Dennis, 'tis not just
“ To see my kingdom humbled to the dust ;
“ Throne, girt with lillies, yield not to your foes !
“ Oppress'd Valois ! thy patron feels thy woes ;
“ Nor shall th' insulting island blood-hounds beat
“ The helpless children from their father's seat.---
“ Saint as I am, (God wot, the more's the pity)
“ I bear lodged hatred to this curs'd banditti ;
“ For if I know to read the book of fate,
“ This mutinous, wise nation soon or late,
“ Indulgences, decretals, Bulls shall tear,
“ And burn our Holy father once a year.---

E

“ Dennis

" Dennis avenge the sacrilegious stain,
 " Thy duteous France shall Catholic remain.---
 " Grant me, O sacred rage, some scheme to hit on,
 " To strike, wound, slay these heretics of Britain."

Larded with apostolic execration,
 Such was the holy saint's benign oration;
 And while he mutter'd his soliloquy,
 The chiefs of Orleans were conven'd to tea,
 (This town furrounded by the foe, of course
 Propos'd submission to superior force).---
 There pedant counsellors, and warlike peers,
 In silent sorrow fate, and shook their ears.---
 Poton, Dunois the brave, La Hire the wit,
 Their thumbs for shame and mere vexation bit.
 Curs'd be the man, cries one, who France survives,
 Yet, says another, let us sell our lives;
 Richmond exclaims aloud, by God 'twere good
 To make a bon-fire of this town of wood:

And

And if the dogs have caught us in the toil,
 Let them go rake the cinders for their spoil.—
 Wretch, quoth Trimoule, what mischief brought me here,
 At Milan I have left my only dear;
 Hopeless of life, I wait the foe's alarms,
 Ah! might I fall in Dorothea's arms!—
 The president Louvet, a man of weight,
 One you would take for wife, with solemn state,
 Rose and opined, my lords, we should attain
 The British host by act of parliament:
 For when the enemy's prepar'd to storm,
 We cannot pay too much respect to form.—
 Ah, good Louvet, your wisdom was but short,
 Or you'd have pleaded in another court.—
 Your lady president would hardly fail
 To move your anger, did you know the tale.
 For her the British chieftain Talbot burns,
 And beauteous Louvet equal love returns:

While

While you, not knowing what you do not feel,
Prepare orations for the public weal.---
Now were grave speeches heard, till all were tir'd,
By virtue, and the good of France inspir'd ;
The eloquent La Hire above the rest
Spoke for a length of time, yet spoke the best :
Wisdom like light'ning glanced from man to man,
And left the council wise as it began.---

When from the window, lo, they saw appear
A buggaboo that floated in the air---
A beauteous phantom pierc'd the vault profound
Of azure heaven upon a sun-beam thron'd ;
The faintly odour spread itself around,
And for th' effect of sudden fright atton'd.---
The pointed mitre good St. Dennis wears,
The Stole and Rochet on his shoulder bears ;

His

His sacred brows the holy fillets bind,
 His priestly vestments flutter in the wind
 His lifted hands the past'ral Crozier rear,
 Which Roman augurs erst were wont to bear,---
 Such was the dreadful vision they essay'd ;
 Trimoule first tumbled on his knees, and pray'd :
 While sturdy Richmond harden'd in his folly,
 A pitiless blasphemer of things holy ;
 Swore 'twas the devil come in masquerade---
 And pleas'd himself without affright or stir,
 To hold a little talk with Lucifer.---
 Louvet ran first to fetch some holy water,
 And twenty other boobies tumbled a'ter.---
 Poton, Dunois the brave, La Hire the wise,
 Gap'd at the saint, and star'd with all their eyes,
 The phantom on his sun-beam perch'd in state
 Enter'd the room and blessed them as they sat ;---

F

Then

Then as they cross'd themselves with due contrition,
Open'd the holy business of his mission.

- “ Be not, my gentle friends, by terror sway'd,
“ My name is Dennis---I'm a saint by trade.
“ I preach'd in France, and love it as my eyes ;
“ Nor can I share the joys of paradise,
“ While Charles is toying with a breast of snow,
“ And sleeps regardless of his country's woe.---
“ But know this day, this glorious day, shall aid
“ The loyal troops who combat in his stead.---
“ I have a nostrum for the nonce to try,
“ That cures the evil by its contrary.---
“ Since Charles is obstinate to sacrifice
“ His realm and honour to a strumpet's charms ;
“ To change his destiny is my device,
“ And save the kingdom by a maiden's arms.---
“ You, who have faith the joys of heaven to prize,
“ Who boast a christian's soul, a Frenchman's name,
“ Whose aid your king, religion, country claim,
“ Assist me in my holy enterprize.---

“ Guide

“ Guide me, O guide me to the region blest,

“ Where this true phenix wantons on her nest.”

Such were thy words, O venerable Seer!

The wicked nobles heard them with a sneer;

And Richmond hardy, blunt, and born to joke,

Burst into laughter, and the saint bespoke;

“ God’s holy lamb and spinage! Mr. preacher,

“ There needed not for this a heavenly teacher---

“ And you are come but to a sorry quarter

“ To find the jewel you are looking a’ter:

“ Besides, tho’ well enough for hours of joy,

“ In war a maidenhead is but a toy.---

“ And my good man of God, why seek it here?

“ Rome and Loretto fewer tapers burn

“ Than paradise has maids to serve a turn,

“ A standing dish to last you thro’ the year---

“ With us that same commodity is dear;

“ We

" We bring but little of such grift to mill ;
" The prince, the peer, the soldier, and the hind
" Have driven off all the cattle of the kind,
" And the forsaken field with bastards fill.---
" Good Dennis, quit such fantasies as these,
" Or go a virgin-hunting where you please.—
The holy faint, confus'd, without reply,
Mounted his fun-beam car and pierc'd the sky :
Determin'd still whate'er it cost to find
The pretty toy, that occupied his mind.
There let him sit enthron'd, or let him run
Round earth's wide orbit with the circling sun ;
While you, kind reader, in his place are led
By yielding Cupid to a maidenhead.----

5 AP 66

END OF THE FIRST CANTO.